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CHARACTERISTICS OF PROSPERITY: BUILDING TOURISM ON A SOLID
FOUNDATION – FRANKENMUTH, MICHIGAN

By

Annette M. Rummel

A project submitted to the Faculty of the
School of Food, Hotel and Travel Management
at
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School of Food, Hotel and Travel Management
Department of Graduate Studies

M.S. Hospitality-Tourism Management
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Name: Annette M. Rummel Date: 4/28/99 SS#: _____

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Specific Recommendations: (Use other side if necessary.)

Thesis Committee: (1) Richard Marecki (Chairperson)

(2) James W. Jacobs, Jr.

OR (3) _____

Faculty Advisor: _____

Number of Credits Approved: _____

4/23/99 _____

Date _____ Committee Chairperson's Signature

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Abstract

Frankenmuth is a lovely community of 4,500 residents, nestled between the two largely automotive cities of Flint and Saginaw in Michigan. This community attracts over 3 million visitors annually, making Frankenmuth, Michigan's #1 visitor destination.

How did this happen? What are those characteristics of the residents that contribute to keep Frankenmuth as the States most popular visitor destination: A storybook town, as enchanting as an old German fairy tale.

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge my husband Willy and daughters Elizabeth and Sarah for their patience, sacrifice, and love that enabled me to pursue additional learning opportunities.

....to acknowledge my friend Tracy, who is always open to be at my side for “the next big adventure!”

...to acknowledge the Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Board of Directors and staff, who have always supported me in my pursuit of personal and professional development.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Frankenmuth, Michigan is located in Saginaw County. It is the only county in the State of Michigan with no natural lake. The Cass River does run through Frankenmuth, but there are no forests or beautiful streams. Frankenmuth has no natural ingredient with which to attract the touring, traveling or recreating public. Yet this community draws in excess of 3 million visitors annually.

This project examines those characteristics of the community's inhabitants that drive the success of the tourism industry to this town. This project details the results of key words and phrases commonly used to describe Frankenmuth.

The Problem

What are the characteristics present in Frankenmuth and the community's inhabitants that have contributed to making Frankenmuth, Michigan a successful visitor destination, while maintaining a high quality of life for its residents?

Background

According to the Travel Industry Association of America's TravelForecast, total travel expenditures in the U.S., including international visitor spending, are forecast to raise 6.4 percent, totaling over \$512 billion in 1998.

Many communities are looking at tourism as the possible

"cure" for economic difficulties. Frankenmuth is a successful example of a community's ability to incorporate tourism into its economic mix, while maintaining an excellent quality of life and a small town atmosphere. From Frankenmuth's beginnings as a missionary site, the community successfully incorporated farming, commerce and trades common to the residents as a means to grow and prosper. The tourism industry began to develop shortly after the end of the 1800's.

Frankenmuth continues to prosper today and maintains a healthy balance of tourism, agriculture, industry and professional trades. The following descriptions, developed by the Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau, provide community statistics taken from the community's economic development information packet.

Quality of Life

Frankenmuth residents are proud of the fine standard of living that they have created in their community. Housing ranges from 100-year-old residences in the Historic District to contemporary homes in newly developed subdivisions. Every area of Frankenmuth is well maintained and groomed. The average State Equalized Value (SEV is 50% of market value) of homes in Frankenmuth is \$52,000. Over 110 acres of parks are found within the City of Frankenmuth.

Services are abundant in Frankenmuth. Fourteen medical and dental offices serve a population of 4,408. Residents have rated City services as good to excellent. These include police

and fire protection, water, sewage, and waste disposal. The community is predominately Christian with five Churches offering services to residents and visitors. Frankenmuth's 34 clubs and community service organizations provide volunteers for festivals and special events and continually contribute back to the community.

Frankenmuth School District is regarded as one of Michigan's premier districts with high standards and outstanding achievements. Test results consistently rank students in the top 90% in all categories. In addition, 92% of Frankenmuth's graduates advance into post high school education. The drop out rate over the past ten years is less than ½ of 1%.

Nearly 80% of the teaching staff have master's degrees and teach in their area of expertise. Frankenmuth Schools have never experienced a strike or work disruption. Frankenmuth is ranked as Michigan's #1 visitor destination by the State of Michigan.

Population continues to increase in Frankenmuth, with the most recent census figures at 4,408. Population has increased 17% over the 1980 census count. Frankenmuth's total labor force in 1995 consisted of 1,875 persons, of which 96.5% were employed.

The City of Frankenmuth State Equalized Valuation has grown to an estimated \$149 million in 1995. This consists of approximately 57.4% residential, 36.6% commercial, 3.9% industrial and 2.1% other categories. City property tax millage stands at 8.6 mills.

The City of Frankenmuth received the Community of Economic Excellence Certificate of Merit award from the State of Michigan in 1997. This award is given for outstanding efforts in economic development and contributing to a better future for Michigan.

Purpose

This study will provide knowledge to those individuals who are responsible for planning and implementing a tourism program. They will learn the characteristics that have contributed to Frankenmuth's success. This study will also be presented as a permanent record to the Frankenmuth Historical Museum.

It should remind future Frankenmuth generations about the successful characteristics that were Frankenmuth's foundation.

Significance

Tourism Planners from other communities will use this information to compare the characteristics that have contributed to Frankenmuth success to those found within their community. The tourism planner's confidence for success may be solidified. They may identify and target areas for improvement and they may provide feedback of information that will help Frankenmuth to improve.

The tape recordings of my interviews will preserve the opinions and experiences of the individuals interviewed.

Scope and Limitations

The limitations of this study include the comfort level of the candidates responding to the questions and their frame of mind the day of the interview. Additional limitations may include the number of candidates versus the number of actual citizens comprising the residential fabric of Frankenmuth. However, these individuals were selected because they occupied key leadership roles at the time that this study was conducted.

Assumptions

Ideological: Growing up in the rural area surrounding Frankenmuth, the community was perceived as a town filled with people who cared about their homes, families and themselves. When talking to someone from Frankenmuth, one would gain the sense of the great pride that they felt for their community. This was not an arrogant pride, but a pride of appreciation for the blessings experienced. Frankenmuth residents understood that these blessings came from hard work and giving back to the community for the overall good.

Frankenmuth would someday be my home. The community possessed those components of life that matched my desire for quality of life. It is for these reasons that the following procedures will be utilized.

Procedures: The interview process has been selected. Use of a cassette recorder preserved the word-for-word discussion with each individual. Data from these individuals, that reflects their real-life experiences and beliefs regarding

Frankenmuth, was gathered. This information was then taken and transcribed word-for-word from the cassette tapes. The next step was to analyze the data searching for commonly identified characteristics. Key words were recorded and ordered by frequency of response.

Definition of Terms

Frankenmuth: A city found in 1845 by a group of fifteen German-Lutheran missionaries who came to this area for the purpose of teaching Christianity to the Chippewa Indians. *Franken* depicts the province from which the settlers came and *Muth* means courage in German. Thus the name "Frankenmuth" means courage of the Franconians.

Frankenmuth 2000: A plan being implemented within Frankenmuth's Downtown Development Authority boundaries designed to improve the infrastructure and user friendliness of Frankenmuth's business district.

Frankenmuth Citizens for Responsible Government: A group of Frankenmuth residents who monitor the decisions and activities of Frankenmuth's City Government.

Gemeutlichkeit an old German word means warm, friendly hospitality and service.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

The Literature being reviewed has been segregated into five sections. The first section highlights the effect that application of Judeo-Christian values have within society and the family. Section two, focuses in on life in Frankenmuth. Section three provides examples of the tools used within Frankenmuth's five churches to teach Judeo-Christian values. These tools are used in many churches, but their use in Frankenmuth has been identified for the purpose of this project. Section four outlines the Frankenmuth School District and the Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau's Strategic Plans. Section five demonstrates results of a satisfaction survey conducted within Frankenmuth that measures satisfaction levels of the residents.

Application of Christian Values

William S. Lind (1994) discusses the importance of religious and cultural values within a society. He expresses his belief that without these characteristics not only will a society be unsuccessful and prosperous, but indeed it will eventually decay and die. Conversely, with religious and cultural values, a society will grow and prosper. Mr. Lind's beliefs are summarized best in his opening paragraph:

"The American conservative movement's domestic policy is changing fundamentally. The new agenda is found not in economics, but in culture. Responding to both the explicit assaults on Western culture by "politically correct" radicals and the evident decay of such key institutions as the family, cultural conservatism calls for the restoration of traditional Judeo-Christian values in all aspects of national life. Unlike the "religious right," however, cultural conservatives argue for traditional values on a functional basis: Their necessity stems from their fundamental role in the creation of a free, prosperous society. Traditional American religious and cultural values remain the foundation of both prosperity and liberty; if America abandons them, it will end up neither prosperous nor free." (Lind, 1994, p1)

Lind then goes on to draw parallels between societal trends of past civilizations that failed to current trends within current day America. This information is important to this study to demonstrate that a relationship exists between application of religious and cultural values and success of a civilization/community.

Kelly Ettenborough (1999) discusses approaches that parents can use to instill Judeo-Christian values while raising their children. Her work focuses on "spirituality as an everyday part of life for families, gives advice on instilling moral and religious beliefs in children, and acts as a practical reference book for parents." (p.2)

The information supports the premise that instilling a

Judeo-Christian foundation within an individual will aid in their day-to-day decision-making processes. The individual will have the information regarding ways to deal with stressful situations more effectively. This information takes the reader through the initial stages of decision-making. This provides information regarding how to handle the decision or stressful situation.

Ettenborough's information is important to this study to demonstrate that challenges are faced within families, communities and societies. If day-to-day decisions are resolved using a common set of values, resistance to the decision is not likely.

Dean Kruckeberg, (1999) discusses the importance of personal conduct governed by a set of values and beliefs and the challenges that will be faced by the individual in our future world. Kruckeberg focuses on the function of the public relations practitioner. He believes that as communication technologies continue to increase in speed, the role of the public relations practitioner will be to keep and reconcile the values and beliefs of the organization. To accomplish this, the public relations practitioners must first have a clear understanding of their own values and beliefs. Those must be in line with the organization's governing value and beliefs. Kruckeberg also explains that this individual must also be willing to defend these ideologies. He goes on to assign a higher level of responsibility to U.S. public relations practitioners. According to Kruckeberg "U.S. practitioners,

must be at a level far beyond any broad-based acceptance and defense of Judeo-Christian values and traditional Western concepts about freedom and flow of information." (p.3) His reasoning for this heightened responsibility relates to his belief that the act of public relations has been historically identified with the philosophies of democracy and capitalism.

This information is important to this study because it supports the idea that in order to accomplish the goal of success for the community, each individual must understand their own governing values and beliefs and those must be in line with the community. According to this work, the individual must be prepared to defend the community's ideologies.

Frankenmuth:

Johann Georg Rummel, 1895 (and translated into English by Richard Rummel, Johann's grandson,) demonstrated characteristics regarding Frankenmuth's original settlers. Some of the characteristics identified included perseverance in realizing a decision, dependability, trustworthiness and honesty. Rummel also identified the original settlers as being reliable, courageous, faithful and loving. Many current day historians have stated that the original settlers left Germany to flee from poverty. Rummel's research states that "At home they (the original settlers) had enough to live on and they loved their German homeland. It was just the thought of serving the mission that inspired them." (p. 30). This demonstrated the original

settler's dedication of service to others. Rummel mentioned in his writings that after 50 years those congregational rules of order planned at the beginning still exist today with few exceptions in Frankenmuth. Rummel's final wish presented in his writings was that "generations to come, will always take care that German churches and schools and the German language, German customs and all the German virtues, are cherished and esteemed." (p. 57).

Herman F. Zehnder, 1970 provides descriptions regarding Frankenmuth's original settlers and provides a description of life in Frankenmuth up to the 1970's. One such description portrays the Frankenmuth people as being deeply patriotic. People of Frankenmuth believed that God is a God of Order. They wrote the community regulations under this premise. These community regulations very clearly spelled out the rules and responsibilities of members of the community and their responsibilities and privileges as a member of the community. Anyone wishing to become a member of the community must be baptized and confirmed. They must lead a Christian life and be engaged in an honorable occupation. Many more rules, responsibilities and privileges were listed. Residents of the community were encouraged to know the people they work with, be at peace with themselves, to support the weak, be patient toward each other and see that no person intentionally renders evil on another. They were also encouraged to "follow that which is good, rejoice, pray without ceasing and be thankful, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (p.154). In his

conclusion, Zehnder states "The character of the people determines the character of a community. Frankenmuth, Michigan is a community with character" (p. 286).

The motto of the founders of Frankenmuth, which was on the original seal of the church, speaks to the lay members of the present generation and to all that will follow them:

"HOLD THAT FAST WHICH THOU HAST,
THAT NO MAN TAKE THY CROWN.

Revelation 2:10"

Living With Jesus is the most recent book of Frankenmuth's history published to date. Written by Pastor Deterding, (1995) of Frankenmuth's St. Lorenz Church. Richard Rummel, o Frankenmuth, provided the photographs. This book was written in celebration of St. Lorenz Church and Frankenmuth's 150th year celebration. This book duplicates the ideas, opinions and characteristics of all previous books reviewed. That faith in God, "Gemuetlichkeit", community pride and hard work ethic that were a part of the beginning of Frankenmuth still exist in Frankenmuth today. According to this book, the Christian mission remains unchanged.

In summary, Pastor Deterding notes that "each individual is a significant part of today's history. Just as St. Lorenz Church is made up of a multitude of individual parts, each person is a significant part of the whole." (p.298)

Each work reviewed in this section is important to this study because it provides insight into the characteristics of

the people of Frankenmuth. They demonstrate the founders desire to serve others and live according to the Judeo-Christian principles and how they applied those principles to their every day lives. Deterding's book specifies that these principles continue today.

Learning Tools:

This section in the Literature Review was drawn from the Lutheran and Catholic Catechisms (1998) of Frankenmuth's Lutheran and Catholic Churches. The Bible teachings and Catechism were the life foundation of the original settlers of Frankenmuth.

Additionally, Frankenmuth has been influenced through the teachings of Jesus Christ who provided care, concern and forgiveness to all sinners. Jesus Christ made the ultimate sacrifice of death on the cross for the forgiveness of sin. In Frankenmuth's Parochial School and in Frankenmuth's churches these beliefs are still taught today.

This information is important to demonstrate the commitment within the community to perpetuate the values, beliefs, and traditions of the community by passing it along to the next generation of Frankenmuth's leadership. This information outlines those teachings that Frankenmuth citizens strive to live by in their day to day lives.

The Frankenmuth Public Schools - Strategic Plan

The strategic plan of the Frankenmuth Public Schools outlines the action strategies as follows:

◆Benchmark #1 - Support all employees in the spirit of teamwork by setting examples as role models, making truth, integrity, honesty, and goodwill priorities in our public and private lives. Empower others and remove barriers to achievement. Develop internal communications.

◆Benchmark #2 - Provide focus, oversight, and follow-through for the strategic plan by reporting and discussing plan quarterly.

◆Benchmark #3 - Summarize and relate educational data by sharing information on educational issues and research.

◆Benchmark #4 - Enhance and build on the District's tradition of academic and extracurricular excellence by identifying and addressing assessment of students and teachers.

◆Benchmark #5 - Remain financially responsible to the taxpayers of our school district by determining fiscal management guidelines, and provide stewardship for all resources. Determine and maintain a minimum fund balance in the general, building, and site fund budgets and communicate with constituents, Board members and employees about the State's funding process.

◆Benchmark #6 - Plan for the effective use of all facilities for the next decade by developing a long-range plan for the use of facilities.

◆Benchmark #7 - Manage the need for collecting fees and raising funds for student activities by studying the fund-raising process in the district.

◆Benchmark #8 - Form partnerships with community stakeholders by identifying opportunities for involvement and partnerships and collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce.

Benchmark #1 and #8 tie into the values identified in the first three sections of this study by encouraging a learning environment that promotes truth, integrity, honesty and good will. This environment also supports a unified community that works together for the betterment of its citizens. A real-life example of this is the Job Shadowing Program. This joint Frankenmuth Schools System/Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau program matches students with mentors within a specific area of interest. These students are provided an environment of care, concern and nurturing and given the opportunity to observe the day-to-day work expected within their respective career selection.

The *Strategic Plan of the Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce*

The Strategic Plan of the Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce can be summarized by using the vision statement, values and beliefs statement, mission statement, and reviewing the Goals of the organization. This information, taken from the Strategic Plan, has been provided below:

**Strategic Plan of the Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce and
Convention & Visitors Bureau**

The Community of Frankenmuth

Vision

Frankenmuth will continue to build on the solid foundation our forefathers have established. Our community will be seen as progressive and growth oriented, yet will maintain the cooperative atmosphere of a small town. We will remain Michigan's #1 visitor attraction and promote the community's Bavarian heritage. "Hospitality and friendliness" will be words most frequently used to describe us.

We will continue to provide those living and doing business in our community with the highest quality of life possible. Those that live in and visit Frankenmuth will recognize that our community is clean, safe and attractive. We will develop and enhance our strong education system, and with growth, provide opportunities for our youth to remain and prosper in our community. An excellent infrastructure will support our vision for growth and the maintenance of our high quality of life. We will build alliances with surrounding communities to promote good will and prosperity.

**The Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce and
Convention & Visitors Bureau**

Values and Beliefs

The values and beliefs that guide the Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau are bound in the

values and beliefs of the community. Our strong spiritual beliefs, heritage, family values, high morals, and ethics guide both the community and our organization.

Cooperation between business, industry, education, government, community service organizations and the community at large is key to ensuring our future. A spirit of pride and willingness to serve our community is essential. We believe in genuinely caring for and showing hospitality and friendliness to all who live in and visit our community.

We believe that we must give back to our community to ensure its growth and prosperity. A strong work ethic and desire to succeed are necessary.

The quality of life we enjoy in our community is directly related to a strong economic base, the physical attractiveness of our community, the education provided to our youth, and our ability to be innovative and progressive.

We believe that we must continually improve services to our members. The Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau provides leadership to the community, and our actions must support our beliefs and values.

The Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce and

Convention & Visitors Bureau

Mission

The mission of the Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau is to promote Frankenmuth and the prosperity of all businesses in the community through a unified

organization. We will promote cooperation and unity in the community, foster "gemuetlichkeit," and nurture our Bavarian heritage.

**The Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce and
Convention & Visitors Bureau**

Goals

1. Maintain Frankenmuth's status as Michigan's #1 visitor destination.
2. Enhance the community's image and heritage as "Michigan's Little Bavaria."
3. Create avenues and opportunities to promote the quality products and services of area businesses.
4. Encourage the retention, growth and development of businesses that are complementary to our community.
5. Promote excellence in hospitality and customer service as a way of doing business.
6. Serve as Frankenmuth's business ambassador and liaison with the various levels of government, surrounding communities, trade associations, and other organizations.
7. Encourage the retention and growth of membership in the Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau and promote active involvement in all organizational programs.
8. Take an active role in linking business and education.
9. Maintain an organizational and financial structure that will Ensure a unified Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce, Frankenmuth Convention & Visitors Bureau, and Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce Foundation organization.

This information is important to this study because it demonstrates organizational use of Christian principles within community organizations that serve the community.

Frankenmuth's Community Opinion Survey of 1994; was conducted by John Ahlberg. Ahlberg represented Ahlberg and Associates from Anjoy QSP of Ann Arbor, Michigan and the University of Michigan. One thousand eighty three questionnaires were delivered and 899 (or 83%) participated to provide the results indicated below. The following highlights some of the results of this survey:

Satisfaction - Conclusions

- ◆All Citizens are very satisfied with living in Frankenmuth.
- ◆Increased citizen's satisfaction and sense of community will impact their involvement, increase membership affiliations, and increase newcomer's sense of community.
- ◆Strong support exist for maintaining German heritage.
- ◆Strong support exists for the community vision.
- ◆Physical environment listed appearance, safety, and roads as a strength.
- ◆Human environment listed local business people, schools, chamber of commerce, external cooperation and honoring the past as a strength.
- ◆Public and private services listed parks, schools and education, Wickson library, local history, utilities, refuse collection and emergency services as a strength.

♦Economic Development and other aspects listed tourism and how Frankenmuth compares to other communities a strength.

This information is important to this study because it summarizes the opinions of residents of Frankenmuth pertaining to their satisfaction levels with quality of life issues.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Information for this study was gathered during interviews that were conducted with individuals from Frankenmuth. The individuals were selected as interview candidates because of the key roles they play within the community and that they are all currently Frankenmuth residents.

Each individual was asked one question: What is Frankenmuth? The candidate responded to the question, incorporating life experiences from any aspect of their life that they felt was appropriate. The responses included information pertaining to family, business, religious and educational perspectives. Every effort was made to ensure that the interviews were conducted in a like and objective fashion.

The data was analyzed by identifying key points contained within each interview. This information was placed on a graph. The key points were also placed in the order of common response from most to least frequent.

Interviews were conducted with business owners, residents and key civic leaders. Mr. Jerry Blohm, Finance Chairman for Frankenmuth 2000; Mr. Randy Brautigam, Director of the Public Works Department for the City of Frankenmuth; Mr. Tony D'Anna, Business Owner and Liaison to Michigan Department of Transportation; Mr. John Deterding, Frankenmuth's Assistant City Manager; Mr. Charlie Graham, Frankenmuth's City Manager; Mr. Don Keller, Business Owner, Member of the Convention & Visitors

Bureau Marketing Committee; Mr. Richard Krafft, Former Mayor of Frankenmuth and current Chairman of the Building Committee for Frankenmuth 2000; Mr. Phil List, Economic Development Chairman for Frankenmuth; Mr. Norm Meyers, Chairman of the Citizen's for Responsible Government; Mr. James Petteys, Chief of Police for the City of Frankenmuth; Mr. Jerry Thompson, Chairman of Frankenmuth 2000; Mr. Martin Zehnder, Business Owner and Chairman of the Board Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau, were the individuals selected for the interview process. The transcripts of the interviews are found in Appendices A - L.

CHAPTER IV
Findings and Analysis

The following information reflects the responses in descending order of response:

<u>#'s of responses</u>	<u>Characteristic Referred To</u>
25	Religious Affiliations/Churches
12	Positive Atmosphere
11	Pride in the Community
11	Outstanding School System
8	Volunteerism
7	Clean
7	Work Ethic
7	Caring Neighbors
6	Friendly
5	Safe
5	German Heritage
4	Good Use of Tax Dollars
4	Unique
3	Agricultural Ties
3	Quality of Life
3	Dedicated People
3	Good Infrastructure
3	Likeminded
3	Great Place to Raise a Family
3	Experiencing some Community Division
2	Cooperative Efforts

Responses in descending order of response continued:

2	Home
2	Honesty
1	Conservative
1	Always Something New
1	Progressive
1	Small Town
1	Sheltered
1	Little Government Assistance
1	Few Jobs to Retain our Young People

Table I. Characteristics Identified by Interviewees as
Important to the Cultural Character of Frankenmuth, Michigan

Responses In random order	Blohm	Brautigam	D'Anna	Deterding	Graham	Keller	Krafft	List	Meyers	Petteys	Thompson	Zehnder
Conservative					x							
Proud		xx			xx		xxx					
Safe	x	x	x			xx						
German Heritage		xx	x		xx							x
Agriculture						x	x	x				
Clean	x	xx	x					x		x		x
Friendly	xxx		x				x	x				
Outstanding Schools	x	x	x		x	x	xx	x	x	x		x
Volunteerism	x		xxx	x			xxx					
Something new						x						

Table I Continued. Characteristics Identified by Interviewees as Important to the Cultural Character of Frankenmuth, Michigan

Responses In random order	Blohm	Brautigam	D'Anna	Deterding	Graham	Keller	Krafft	List	Meyers	Petteys	Thompson	Zehnder
Quality of Life						X		XX				
Cooperative Efforts										XX		
Dedication		XXX										
Religious Influence	XX	XX	XX		XX	X	XXXX XXX	XXX	XXX		XXX	X
Caring Neighbors			XX		XX			XX	XX		X	
Progressive							X					
Small Town			X									
Atmosphere	XX XX		XX		XX	XX	XXX					
Good Infrastructure		X		X			X					

Table I Continued. Characteristics Identified by Interviewees as Important to the Cultural Character of Frankenmuth, Michigan

Responses In random order	Blohm	Brautigam	D'Anna	Deterding	Graham	Keller	Krafft	List	Meyers	Petteys	Thompson	Zehnder
Good Use of Tax Money				x			xx					
Willing to Change					x							
Home	x						x					
Sheltered				x								
Like Minded							xx				x	
Unique	x				x			x			x	
Great Place to Raise Family	x					x					x	
Work Ethic					xx		xxx	xx				
Little Govt. Assistance						x						
Honest							xx					

Table I Continued. Characteristics Identified by Interviewees as Important to the Cultural Character of Frankenmuth, Michigan

Zehnder		
Thompson		
Petteys		X
Meyers		
List		
Krafft	X	
Keller		X
Graham		
Deterding		X
D'Anna		
Brautigam		
Blohm		
Responses In random order	No Jobs for Young People	Division in Community

Chapter V

Conclusion

Findings

The findings of this study supported the hypothesis that values and beliefs associated with Christian teaching and a hard work ethic be the characteristics most commonly identified with Frankenmuth's success. The response, religious affiliations/churches was indicated more than 2 to 1 over the second highest response by candidates during the interview process. Work ethic ranked within the top 10 responses. Responses also included within the top 10 follow: Positive atmosphere, Pride in the Community, Outstanding School System, Volunteerism, Clean, Caring Neighbors, Friendly and Safe.

Summary

This study demonstrates that Judeo/Christian characteristics and behaviors play an important function within the community of Frankenmuth. Authors of books written about Frankenmuth, research studies focusing on the community and interviews with people who live, work, and hold key community leadership positions in Frankenmuth all have held the Judeo/Christian way of life as the solid foundation on which Frankenmuth's success is built.

Recommendations

Should other communities or individuals wish to use Frankenmuth as a reference point for success, perhaps they could inventory those characteristics typically linked to Christian teachings and a hard work ethic. These should be benchmarked within their respective communities or life. This could be the first step in organizing future efforts.

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Appendix A

Interview: Mr. Gerald Blohm - Hi, It's September 4th I am here today with Jerry Blohm, and Jerry is the Chairman of finance for the Frankenmuth 2000 committee.

Jerry, thank you so much for being here today, and to share your thoughts and ideas about Frankenmuth. Why don't we start out today by having you introducing your self? Tell us a little bit about who you are and your life, and then we will go right into the first question.

J: Alright, I am originally from Saginaw. I met my wife who was from Frankenmuth in high school a number of years ago. And we lived here originally after we were married in the mid-fifties. I moved away in 1959 in pursuit of my business career, and spent the last twenty years in Chicago. Upon retiring we moved to the Frankenmuth area, to Frankenmuth itself actually, as a retirement home and actually kind of returning home.

A: Okay, lets talk about Frankenmuth itself, in your opinion what is Frankenmuth?

J: Well, I think Frankenmuth, just from a personal standpoint is a place that we just call home. It is a quite safe, clean community, friendly with an attractive atmosphere, and one that

makes a very pleasant place to live. It is also blessed with a very good school system. Although that wasn't our reason for moving here because we are retired, but when you look at the overall picture of Frankenmuth I think that you have to include the school system as a major contributor to the quality of life in Frankenmuth itself. That is probably what Frankenmuth mean to us at this point.

A: Okay, can you talk about Frankenmuth as it relates to your contributions as a volunteer in the community, and maybe some of the services that you have provided as a volunteer?

J: Well my activities at the volunteer level have been almost exclusively with the hospitality plan. I think as I became involved with first the tax issue, and then the development of the downtown area, and acquired an understanding of how the downtown would be funded and what the development would mean to the community, it was only natural that you would get involved in a process like that and try to help it fulfill itself. The opportunity to reinvest your own money in your own city is too great an opportunity to pass up. And that is primarily where my involvement is in the community at this point.

A: Okay, and how about what is Frankenmuth as far as living here?

J: Well, I guess if you have lived in the City as I have for

the last thirty-five years, it's like going on vacation. It is a relaxed atmosphere. One where everyone says hello, people smile at you as you go by them on the street. You find that in a lot of resort areas but you don't find it in the cities, where the atmosphere is cold and not very caring. So, I think from a personal standpoint it is a very pleasurable place to be. It is also; we also have a lot of relatives here, so it made it very comfortable to come back to. It's not like moving into an unknown, but rather a known.

Appendix B

Interview: Mr. Randall Brautigam- A: This is Annette Rummel, I am here on September 2nd with Randy Brautigam who is the head of our city works department, and Randy is going to share his thoughts regarding the question what is Frankenmuth? Randy Thanks for coming.

R: That's quite all right.

A: In your opinion Randy: what is Frankenmuth? Talk to me about all aspects of your life, and the community and your perceptions of Frankenmuth.

R: I have been here all my life. I started out right out of high school, working at the public works department. About five years ago I took a supervisory job. Frankenmuth to me is, I would like to see it as one of the cleanest communities in the United States. I feel very comfortable working here. I am proud to work here. I think that we have some great business people here in this town who are very dedicated to Frankenmuth, and I am very dedicated to Frankenmuth. I really feel, I think that we should develop our downtown and get it as authentic as we can for Germany, German look I should say. How to do that I

don't know without making waves with residence. I mean that's, I mean it seems like we have people that are totally against the whole concept of what they want to accomplish here. Frankenmuth to me is curb, gutter and sidewalks. I would like to see not a gravel street or....

A: Okay Randy Thank you

Like I said I would like to see sidewalks through out the community. No gravel streets. To me that is Frankenmuth. It gives us a clean look and it is very easy to maintain that way. People don't agree with me on that point, some people don't. But that is my goal. Because as supervisor here I have a really good working crew, I feel anyway. They work hard for me. I am proud of them. Like any other city, we have a few worries here and there, but we work through them.

A: Randy, What do you think that Frankenmuth is for your family life?

R: Frankenmuth to me is one of the safest communities that I have ever walked through. I don't have to worry if my wife and children want to go out and walk the streets in the evening, for a casual walk, ride a bike or roller blade. I'm not worried that something is going to happen to them. Traffic is slow

enough in town that if you want to cross the street or something like that you feel safe.

A: How about your church life? I know that you are an active member of St. Lorenz Lutheran church, you help out as a volunteer there, and maybe talk about that a little bit, and your perspective of what is Frankenmuth in your religious life.

R: Frankenmuth is a very Christian community. I feel anyway. I have gone to St. Lorenz all my life. I went to the parochial school. My family is the same, in the process right now of going to the parochial school. I think that we have a very great school system here in Frankenmuth. I think that it draws a lot of people to the community because of that. Like I say, St. Lorenz is a Lutheran church. There is a Catholic Church. I think that there is a very big Christian background throughout the community. That helps hold us together I feel.

A: Okay, talk about the recreational aspect of your life. Do you participate in any of the sports here in Frankenmuth or any extracurricular activities or any other volunteer activities that you would like to talk about that might be important?

R: I am an avid snowmobiler, I wasn't too much of a baseball fan or anything like that. I enjoy Bavarian Festival, things like that. Helping Music Fest, Bavarian Festival and some of the festivals and that, those aspects. Sports wise, my family is involved in soccer and basketball and things like that, I enjoy watching them. I love to play volleyball. That is pretty much that for sports.

A: Can you think of any other aspect of Frankenmuth as it pertains to your life that we haven't talked about. We have talked about the schools, the churches, and some of your social life and of course your work life encompasses so much in Frankenmuth because you are involved in the support system that makes Frankenmuth what it is. Is there another aspect of Frankenmuth that you think is important to share?

R: I really feel that they should try to get back to, Frankenmuth was established being a big part by the breweries here in Frankenmuth and in Michigan. I really feel that they need to promote that again. Not as a beer Fest town or anything like that, I mean it brought good jobs to the community, and keep a lot of people active in the community because of the background of that. I am hoping that we never lose that. I know that the brewery is going to start up again here, lets cross our fingers, but I wish we could get more than that.

Appendix C

Interview: Mr. Anthony D'Anna - A: Today is September 4th 1998, I am here with Tony D'Anna. Tony is the former Chairman of the board of the Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau. He currently serves on Frankenmuth 2000. Acts as a volunteer throughout the community of Frankenmuth and does many other functions through the church and through the community. So Tony thank you very much for taking time with us today. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your background before we go into the question that I would like to ask you?

T: Yes, well Annie, I was born in Detroit Michigan. I moved to Frankenmuth in 1983. Prior to that, I worked in the automotive industry, and I had a variety of jobs in there. Positions with Rockwell International. Left as a plant manager for one of their facilities in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Moved up here in 1983 where I purchased the McDonald's restaurant and since that time I have purchased five others in this area.

A: Okay, and tell me a little bit about your family.

T: Well my wife was born in Detroit too. I have three children. I have a daughter Katherine who is working on her master's degree in speech pathology at Michigan State

University. I have a son who is a senior at Michigan State in accounting, and I have a son who is an eleventh grader at Frankenmuth High School. And all of my children have gone to Frankenmuth High school.

A: Okay great, and let's get to the question. Tony, what do you think Frankenmuth is? What is Frankenmuth to you?

T: Well Frankenmuth to me I would have to say, when we looked at coming up here we gave it a lot of thought because it's a small town, and we are from the Detroit Metropolitan area. Specifically, we are from the Wyndot River area. To me this is a great community to raise a small town; I love the heritage here. I think that this German heritage has made the town special in the way that it is a clean town, it is a safe town, and it is a Christian town. It is a super place to raise your family. The schools are top notch. And on top of all that it is the number one tourist town in Michigan so we have Main Street outlined with a lot of different variety of restaurants and retail outlets so it makes it a neat place to live.

A: Okay, and what do you think about doing business here? How do you feel as a businessperson here in Frankenmuth?

T: I am happy to do business here. When I first moved up here I was a little concerned. You hear that it is a small close-knit community, and it is. But, you put your foot forward, and

people come back three feet your way, and I found the people to be open and very friendly with our family and I feel that we are completely accepted here, and I feel happy doing business here. My business has grown over the years.

A: Okay, how about your affiliation in Frankenmuth with the Churches. What do you think about that area?

T: I think that the churches are outstanding. We belong to Blessed Trinity Catholic Church. It is an outstanding church. It is a good size church. I think that the people also volunteer and participate here. St. Lorenz Lutheran Church, which is close to my home and most of my neighbors, are Lutherans, have just been great to us. You know my son goes to bible study at the Lutheran church, and he is also a member of the local Catholic Church.

A: Okay, and what about volunteering in the community of Frankenmuth. Can you talk about that a little bit?

T: Well my experience, like I say I have been here since 1983 volunteerism is very high. People are quick to help. They help to support causes. You know I can remember whether it is the flood that came or the tornado that hit us, we sure had some interesting things happen to us over the years. And everyone is right on the spot to support you, to help you. Getting people to volunteer for festivals has been real successful so I think

this town goes way above and beyond other places that I have lived.

A: Now you are quite involved with the festivals, especially the AutoFest here you lead the group that organizes that show. Could you talk for just a moment on what it is like to organize volunteers for a show of that size?

T: Well there are some pro's and con's to that. There is good and bad, okay. The hard part is that it is always hard to take volunteers and stay with a certain vision and go on because it is a lot of work doing these shows, because people have jobs and families and they volunteer to do things with their kids at the school and church. But they are there to help. They are there the day the show goes on. Everybody works hard. This show has grown; I'll just take this one show. We have grown to 1,800 cars and oldies tent on Saturday. When the time comes for it to happen the people are there and working. And I think that we have seen that whether it is the Bavarian Fest or Oktoberfest. There are so many activities going on in Frankenmuth. People are there to help.

Appendix D

Interview: Mr. John Deterding -A: Hi, I am here with John Deterding today is September the third, 1998 and John and I will be talking about the question, What is Frankenmuth. So John thanks for taking the time with me to do this. And I ask you to begin by giving me your impressions, What is Frankenmuth?

J: Okay that is an interesting question. We moved here, my family moved here in the early sixties and I think I was eight years old, so I spent the majority of my life here and went to St. Lorenz through grade 8, and to Frankenmuth High School. From High school I went to Delta College, and then to Western Michigan University; then I moved back to town. I think Frankenmuth in the past has been a community that worked together: business, residential, community, volunteering, service, working together to get the job done. I think that a way to make a community a better place to live is to get involved. Either through a service organization or fire department or civics events council, and I guess that has been my history of involvement. I think that people move to Frankenmuth because of all the development that has taken place in the residential area, the curves the sidewalks, the property values have maintained because of all those improvement which probably make it more expensive that other communities but I

think that is what attracts people here. I get a sense that the community has changed somewhat in the last five to ten years. Maybe just lack of additional volunteers in certain areas. And just some general feelings that you get here at City Hall of the services that they demand from the community. And I think that we provide an excellent level of service to the taxpayer. But I think that is what makes Frankenmuth a desirable place to live, the infrastructure, the services that they get the biggest bang for your buck, your tax buck I think is locally. I guess that sums up my comments for that one.

A: Okay, Anything else about Frankenmuth maybe from your relationship with the churches or maybe with the family environment and having a family here in Frankenmuth?

J: Well, I am a member of St. Lorenz, I have been a member since the early sixties I am involved in a lot of the activities there. Every time you serve on a board at a church you get to know different people in a different light. I guess that is one of the best things about volunteering on some organizations and boards is that I get to meet people I would have normally never have associated with. You get a good, well-rounded background and people know you. It kind of helps with problem solving sometimes if you are a member of the same church; you can at least sit down and talk to them. You might not agree you can

agree to disagree sometimes but at least you have that open line of communication. I live in Frankenmuth. I have three daughters I raised. They went to the local school systems, the same schools that I went to. Frankenmuth I believe is a sheltered community as based on other cities in the state, but I don't think that is all that bad either. You grow up quickly when you go away to college and realize that there is a different world out there.

Appendix E

Interview: Mr. Charles Graham - A: Today is September third. I am here with the Frankenmuth City Manager, Charlie Graham. This is Annette Rummel. I am going to ask Charlie the questions; what is Frankenmuth? So Charlie before we address the question, can you tell me a little bit about yourself, where you were born, where you grew up. How long you have been in Frankenmuth, and a little bit about your current position. Then we will go right into question. So first, thank you for taking time with us today.

C: Okay, I was born on May the 10th 1942 in a town named Durant Oklahoma. It was a town of about 10,000 people in 1942. It is a town of about 10,000 in 1998. So there hasn't been much change there. It is in the southern part of the state of Oklahoma. It is only about 15 miles from the Texas border. The people there have a closer association with Dallas, than Oklahoma City. When I was 14 we moved to the Texas pan handle, Amarillo, and that is where I finished high school. I went to college in Texas. I spent some time in the Army, three years. I went to work for the city of Phoenix in 1970. That is where I met my wife. In 1974 we moved to Pueblo, Co. We spent five years there. Both of our kids were born there. We came to Frankenmuth in 1979. And we have been here ever since, and pretty soon here it will be 19 years. So that is sort of some of my background.

A: Okay, the question; what is Frankenmuth in your opinion. If you could view this question, not only as the city manager, but also as a resident, a member of a local church, living here, socializing here. Address it from a lot of variations.

C: Frankenmuth is a community of people. It's got a unique background because of the fact that German missionaries settled it in 1845, who came here for the purpose of teaching Christianity to the Indians. It didn't take too long before their focus kind of changed from that. They still retain a lot of their German heritage for many, many years. In fact, some of that heritage is still retained today. And, so it is a unique community. There are not too many places like Frankenmuth. There has been quite a lot of growth in the community over the years. And I think that growth has changed the town somewhat, yet it has still been able to retain some of that character. The local townspeople decided probably back in the fifties that the idea of developing tourism was beneficial for the economic health of the community. And it has been beneficial, and so for the last forty or fifty years the development of tourism has been the key to Frankenmuth's economic prosperity. Along with the fact that there is a good strong agricultural base in the surrounding area. Plus a few other business that are not necessarily tourist oriented. But I think that the real key to the community is the people themselves. Strong work ethic, a strongly Christian oriented community. Outstanding school

system. One that everyone I believe is proud of. The ethics, and attitude, and the whole fiber of the community, the tone for it was set many, many years ago. For the most part the people who move here have adapted to those same kinds of attitudes. So the pride in the community has been able to be maintained over the years, even as things have changed. So it is a town of basically good people, pretty conservative, but willing to accept some change as time evolves, but still wanting to maintain its heritage, and those good basic values that they have had in the past.

Appendix F

Interview: Mr. Donald Keller - A: It is September fourth this is Annette Rummel I have an interview today with Don Keller. Don and I have worked together for many years. He is the General Manager and owner of Promotions Plus. And so Don, today I am going to ask you the question; what is Frankenmuth? So first thank you for coming here and taking time this morning, and why don't you share a little bit about yourself and then we will address the question.

D: Well thank you. Lets see this is 1998 so I am 53 years old. I was born and raised in a farming area in southwest Michigan. Bridgeman, a little town between St. Joe and Benton Harbor on the lake. Our family was involved in fruit farming. And of course, growing up as a child I saw lots and lots of visitors and tourists coming into our area from Chicago, various parts of Indiana, coming around from Wisconsin to use our lakes. We have a beautiful sand dune covered Lake Michigan shoreline in my hometown. So as a child I saw lots of visitors coming in on weekends, and somewhat taking over the town on weekends as they were vacationing in cabins or staying on the beach or camping. That was my first introduction to tourism. Having graduated from college with a degree in Economics, I came to Frankenmuth in 1969, and was part of the Bavarian Inn growing restaurant business at that time. So the time I've spent in Frankenmuth I

saw the Bavarian Inn grow from about 650 seat capacity to about 1,300, which has almost doubled over the last 29 years, I guess.

Lots of changes in Frankenmuth but lots of things have remained the same. My general sense for Frankenmuth is that as a twenty-four year old I had an option to live almost anywhere and I had an option to be an international salesperson. Which meant a lot of international travel of course. And I opted rather to settle down in Frankenmuth, a small community, primarily to raise a family and be able to take advantage of the small town atmosphere, which I grew up with as a child. I wanted my children to have that benefit as opposed to hoping on subways and using mass transportation in large cities, etc. I have been just elated, and delighted and pleased with the last 29 years in Frankenmuth. I have enjoyed the high quality of life in this town. I have enjoyed the great educational system that we have that sometimes we don't realize just how good it really is. Our school district is very well run. I have enjoyed the attention to historical preservation. Which of course, my father-in-law Tiny Zehnder, has had a lot to do with in the last fifty years. A growing and enhanced museum and historical association is important. The schooling I mentioned, the great mix of churches in this town. With the various groups from the Lutheran churches, to the Methodist, to the Catholic, to the Bible churches, we have it all. And I think that it is a great blend and mix. We have had very aggressive businesses that have catered to the local people or the residents in Frankenmuth over

all the years. From the hardware store dealer to the grocery stores and Ben Franklin and the furniture store, of course we are lacking in some areas such as, we don't have much in the way of apparel, clothing, shoe store, and that type of thing. But overall I think there is a good base for retail business in this town to support the four thousand plus residents that we have with great shopping opportunities twenty-minutes, twenty-five minutes away. It has been a real good experience. I think that my children have and are continuing to grow up in a very good environment, safe environment. We're not concerned by drive by shootings in this town; we don't necessarily appreciate the degree of security that we do have in the community. And all and all I would not have traded the last thirty years in this town for living in any other town. And I have traveled quite extensively, over the years. It is just a great community which to raise a family and a great community which to grow old in. I have no intentions of buying a condo down south or retiring to Arizona, we don't have cottages up North. We don't do snowmobiling, and we don't do a lot of those things. My leisure time is spent at my home on Creamer Drive right in Frankenmuth.

A: Don, could you please address your business activities here in Frankenmuth, and what conducting business in Frankenmuth has been for you?

D: For all the reasons that it is a great place to live and

raise a family. I guess you can't keep that a secret. People gravitate to visit places that they feel safe and secure in and so we have been blessed with good businesses that can accommodate large numbers of visitors to Frankenmuth, ever since the thirties. This is not a new phenomenon. You can see pictures in the archives of people lined up for the famous chicken dinners back in the thirties, at Fischer's Hotel, which is now the Bavarian Inn, so when I did come into Frankenmuth, my charge was to learn the business of the Bavarian Inn Restaurant and to help it grow over the last several decades. It has been a pleasure and a delight in the business, commercial atmosphere that Frankenmuth has had over all these years. The major difference I see with this community from others that might be a little larger is that the driving force for increasing business has pretty much always come directly from the private sector. In the thirty years that I have been here it could be that only in the last four or five years has city government even recognized tourism as an industry in Frankenmuth let alone, in the undisputed leading industry in the town and has been for a long time. It, of course, has the absolute highest base of employment in the city of Frankenmuth. It collectively, the tourism-oriented businesses are the largest segment of tax paying base for the city of Frankenmuth. And it is rather surprising that city council and city government never really recognized it as an industry. Generally when we discussed business back in the 50's, 60's, 70's, and early 80's; in city hall they were talking about manufacturing firms, about brewery

and Universal Engineering and the bank and of course, Star of the West Milling Company. And there was really very little attention really paid to the industry of tourism in Frankenmuth. About eight years ago that started to change. It had to do with room tax allocations and a tremendous amount of room tax that was collected and continues to be collected by the Frankenmuth lodging properties. That goes through Saginaw County, and that debate about getting that room tax, ended up being an educational process for the community by which a lot of community leaders, their eyes were open and they realized the tremendous economic impact that is taking place here. So doing business, back to your original question, that is a little background. But the Bavarian Inn has expanded and done their thing without any governmental help, and in the past they haven't asked or received any type of tax abatements to the extent of new facilities that are open to industrial or manufacturing facilities. We're not eligible for it so of course, we wouldn't ask for it. Zehnder's of Frankenmuth has done the same thing. Bronner CHRISTmas Wonderland made a major move south of town, and has invested many million of dollars into their operation with really not direct financial assistance in any way from city government or city taxpayers. The development of the tourism industry hasn't been an overnight thing. It wasn't like one day all of a sudden we had two million visitors a year that has grown steadily over a long period of time. The theory has always been to keep people coming back to Frankenmuth you have to keep offering them something new. There is always something

new. Hence the philosophy of Bavarian Inn, Zehnder's, Bronner's, by adding the Silent Night Chapel, something new that Bronner's Christmas Wonderland has participated in, The Holz Brucke (or wooden covered bridge), the Glockenspiel, something new. Zehnder's enhancement and development of the Fortress golf facility, new and improved landscaping. And of course the Bavarian Inn Lodge which is now a 350 room facility, extended the stay of the visitors through the winter months because of their inclusion of which is now three indoor pools. And catering to other convention business. So generally the businesses have been self supporting, have given a lot to the community, a lot of support to the area service clubs, and the community as a whole, and have really not asked for very much back. In regards to helping develop their businesses.

Appendix G

Interview: Mr. Richard Krafft - This is Richard Krafft who is a life long resident of the community of Frankenmuth who has given his time for service organizations. I believe that you were a Lion. Is that correct?

R: Still am a Lion.

A: You still are a Lion. Member of the Lion's Club, Member of St. Lorenz, served on the church council for many years and is a volunteer throughout the community, and of course city council, and then as mayor of our community, and now as chairman of the building committee of Frankenmuth 2000. Richard, what I am going to do is ask you to address a question which I will be using in a report as well as in my studies for college and as well to turn over to the Historical Museum for record and for the History of Frankenmuth. The question I would like to ask you today is, In your opinion what is Frankenmuth?

R: Well thank you for that generous introduction, Annie. Now what is Frankenmuth? That is a pretty broad question.

Frankenmuth has been my hometown; I have never lived anywhere else but here. I am 68 years old and I have traveled a lot in my work and of all the places I have been to and have enjoyed very much I can honestly say that I don't like anything better than

what I have got right here in Frankenmuth. I like the small town feel, I like the progressiveness, I like meekness, I like the honesty of the people, I like the friendship, I like the atmosphere, of everything I think that we have an excellent schools system both parochial and public, which is truly second to none. Which is proven as one of the best dealing with students. We have got good leadership in the community with mix, and, the infrastructure in this community is truly above any thing else around this area. The condition of our streets with the old hard surfaces, gutters, sidewalks, all the utilities. We have a lot here in this community to enjoy and we have all of this and still have reasonable taxes considering everything that we have here in this community. So I think we are getting a lot for our buck, "Our bang for our buck" and that is what I think about Frankenmuth.

A: Can you talk about Frankenmuth and the different aspects and how it affects your life. Your religious background your business background, your family, and your residential community, some of your volunteerism, In each of these areas. What is Frankenmuth in each of these areas?

R: Well I guess I will start with the religious aspect of it. I feel very privileged and fortunate that I have been born and

raised in a family that was Lutheran. Belonging, started me off in the parochial school system. I feel very fortunate that I had eight years of parochial school. I just feel so good that I was born right here and just admire my religious upbringing. In the process, I was able to pass that along to another generation, and now that generation is passing it along to another generation. I think that it is extremely important to live in a community like Frankenmuth that has a strong religious undertone and support that shows itself in all aspect of living whether it be business, or where it be politics, or so that is that part of it. I really think that, living in a small town like Frankenmuth gives an individual who wants to become involved the opportunity to really get into a lot of things. You mentioned some of the things that I was involved in my lifetime, and as I look back I am sometimes a bit surprised. In fact, I am not surprised at the entire thing that I have been privileged to be a part of. I look at myself and had I been raised in Grand Rapids or Dayton, OH with the population of several hundred thousand people. They don't have a lot more jobs in that community from a city's point of view than a small town and so therefore those few jobs must be spread amongst a hundred thousand people. In our little town we have a lot of these jobs and they are only spread among two or three thousand people. So I think that I was very lucky that way. I may not

have done so much had it been a bigger city so, what other areas were there?

A: Business

R: Oh, business. Well, of course, here too I guess I am an example of a lucky guy, in that I started out in bookkeeping for a very, very small company and stayed with the same company for fifty years. And was fortunate enough to be there and grow with the company and watch it grow, and in a small town like always if the religious, agricultural, hardworking, ethnic background that existed here, it just made the job that I did in business more attainable because we had people that were like minded. They had the same values, religious values, honesty values, community support values, business support values, and you had people working with you and around you, you can make things happen. A small town like ours really has a leg up on areas that don't have that same sort of cooperativeness.

A: How about service organizations? What are your feelings about being part of that in Frankenmuth?

R: Well I am a charter member of the Lions Club, which is forty-five years I guess. I am a member of the community club,

and have done some very, very worthwhile things. I think that the greater value of these club is, has been the fact that we have gotten to know so many of us much better. You get to know someone much better if you work with someone out there digging a hole to build a fence for the Lions Club. You know them in a different way. I think that the festival experience: that was a great experience because that even more so let you learn how people work, and what their talents are and how they solve problems.

A: Anything else that you would want to add on what you believe Frankenmuth is?

R: Well, I guess, I think I boast about Frankenmuth perhaps more than I should, but I just think it is the greatest town around. There is opportunity for the people. One thing that over the years I have been troubled by is the fact that it is such a great community and we have got such a good school system. We produce a good quality student from our schools that go on to college like we do. Unfortunately we don't have enough jobs here in our community to have the young people who live in Frankenmuth, but can find any good jobs here, and that is sad because I am very proud to be from Frankenmuth.

Appendix H

Interview: Mr. Phillip List - A: This is Annette Rummel, and I am here with Phil List. Today is September the 18th, 1998. And Phil List is the former chairman of Frankenmuth 2000. Phil also lead the Frankenmuth Economic committee for many years has agreed to come and talk to us this afternoon. Thanks Phil, I sure appreciate it. Why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself and perhaps about your family?

P: Hi Annie, my background is I am a life-long resident of Frankenmuth. Forty-five years. The only time I was really away from Frankenmuth was getting my undergraduate degrees and have chosen to stay in the Frankenmuth area. I have had plenty of opportunity, especially out of college, to move to the Detroit area, Grand Rapids area, but chose not to. Over the years, I have been in banking twenty-one years, I get daily offers to go somewhere else. It is literally daily now with what is going on in that industry, and I have chosen to stay in the Frankenmuth area because it is unique, and the quality of life is unparalleled. A lot of people find that out late. Many people who had opportunities after school moved away, and now retire back to Frankenmuth. So we are seeing a resurgence of retirees back to the area because they have made their wealth elsewhere but like Frankenmuth, and like the pace in Frankenmuth. My family background, the List's were from the original settlers back in 1845, so we have been for a while. And I am German from

both sides. My mother and father were both German, so I have solid German blood, and like the work ethic, church and religious background that is here in this town.

A: Good, why don't we start out with that since you kind of nicely dovetailed into the question, In your opinion Phil, What is Frankenmuth?

P: While I think it is, I will probably use the word "unique" several times when we talk here. Your social life, your business life, your church life, school it all tends to intertwine. I think that makes it what it is. I think that is why the people care as much as they do. Sometimes, especially with our 2000 plan, we sometimes think that people are butting into things that aren't their business, but it really shows that they care more than anything. I think whether you are in church, and all the churches in Frankenmuth are special, they play a key role in the community. Religious background is really the foundation of Frankenmuth. I think that set the pace for the way people act, care about their neighbors, take care of each other, and are concerned. It's part of why we tend to, we might disagree, but when we leave some heated meeting we end up agreeing and when we do agree we pull out some incredible things that all the other area around us just shake there head and say, "How can they do it there?" Frankenmuth isn't on a lake, it isn't right on I-75, it is in basically, it was settled here to

convert the Indians, and then agriculture, so it does not really have any natural resources to tie tourism and the quality of life. But I think it is that intermixing of with the social, religious, education is key in Frankenmuth, always has been. Our schools are rated top in the state if not in the country. I don't know in the nation, I know in the state. I think that again tie to the really caring attitude that has taken place. It is evident to our visitors. The cleanliness, the friendliness, the over all Gemeutlichkeit, and the German's would say sums it all up in one word. I think in the background that is what makes Frankenmuth what it is, compared to a different community.

Appendix I

Interview: Mr. Norman Meyers - A: Today is September Second and I am here with Norm Meyers. Meyers is the Chairman of the Citizens for Responsible Government. This is a group of concerned residents of Frankenmuth who have helped in the process of developing Frankenmuth and our Main Street. At this point I would like to address the question; what is Frankenmuth to you. First let me Thank you for coming in this afternoon.

N: What is Frankenmuth, I guess I would sort of have to go back to when we were looking at moving into the area. We took a look at several other areas around Frankenmuth and we sort of decided to settle on Frankenmuth because of one the overall appearance of the town being clean. The cleanliness of Frankenmuth, mainly the residential area and also the business area. And at that time Frankenmuth had an overall vibrant downtown area. There were several additional shops on Main Street, there at that time. The other thing is that the church of our choice was here, and it appeared from the information that we gathered that Frankenmuth had a good strong school system. Those were the things that we were interested in when we were looking at relocating to the Frankenmuth area. Since then really, I don't think for me anyway the attitude has changed any. We are still

here because Frankenmuth is a good clean town; everyone takes pride in maintaining their properties. We hear that comment all the time from visitors that we run into. We are not downtown that often, but we still hear those comments. When we are on the road traveling, which we do quite a bit of now, They ask were we are from and we say "Frankenmuth". I would say about 75% of the time people are aware of were Frankenmuth is and probably over 50% of the time the people have been here. They all comment on how Frankenmuth is so clean. How well the houses, the yards, and the downtown, are maintained. That is a comment we hear all the time. We have continued to have a real good strong school system. I can vouch for that, with five kids graduating from it, you know, as they went on to college it made it a lot easier for them because they had a good strong educational background, than just being passed on from grade to grade to grade. I guess, taking a look at the business aspect of Frankenmuth it has definitely changed over the period of time that we have been here, which is almost 30 years, We came in 1970. At that time it was more of what I would consider a small town, down street business environment, anchored by the Hotels, both Bavarian Inn and Zehnder's, as well as Bronner's being located in a variety of buildings on top of the hill. Since then it has sort of changed with more of the local, the old local businesses going out of business such as the hardware

store, that is the only one I can think of off hand, the carpet place, the linoleum place. And others, and the automobile dealership Baker used to be downtown, and those all kind of changed and became part of the tourist environment atmosphere, which is the common business theme downtown in Frankenmuth. My point of view is that they have all done an excellent job in doing the necessary up lifts in front of their buildings, everything looks nice. And there are a lot of communities that you can go into to and can't say that. Whether they are tourist oriented or not, and of course the religious strength of the community has continued to grow. I can't really tell you how many different denominations there are in Frankenmuth right now, One, two, three, four,

A: There are five.

N: There are five. Which has changed considerably since we first moved to town. And I think probably overall, even though

Frankenmuth is probably considered a bedroom community for those people who work in Saginaw, Bay City, Flint, and other towns near by. It has, it doesn't seem to have the normal attitude of the bedroom community. It is very active with service clubs, Jaycee's, Rotary to Lyons to many others, and probably one of

the consolidating forces for that is the Bavarian Festival. Which in the thirty years that I have been here has changed substantially too. Most of it, at least in my opinion, has been to the benefit. Last year they just got done trying another new format. I hope they continue that format for a while because I think it will be successful. If it isn't successful, we probably don't need a festival. You know really. I think that one of the things that I would sort of like to see happen in Frankenmuth is, I would like to see some compatible light industry to come into Frankenmuth. At the present time we really only have one manufacturing firm, the name has changed so many times, it used to be Universal. The present name is, I don't know what is it?

A: It is still Universal Tooling systems, but it's also got 3 or 4 other names behind it.

N: At any rate, I would like to see if possible, some light industry to come in to really further really broaden our tax base. With the Frankenmuth Citizen for Responsible Government, it has, to me become rather apparent that we are becoming very top heavy residential, as far as being a percentage of the tax base. The downtown development I think that within the next several years will add tremendously to the tax base, just with

recent new ventures being undertaken with a the motel and the brewery again, and the addition of the Rummel Platz. So there is going to be additional valuation in the downtown, but that is somewhat limited because of the size of the area. So as the Residential area keeps growing and demands keep coming up for additional schooling need, for additional service need, whether it be fire, police, or whatever. It is in general would be beneficial to everyone if we had a more diverse tax base. I don't know if it will ever happen, but at least in theory it would be a nice thing to see happen.

A: Any other idea of what is Frankenmuth, you have really done a wonderful job in explaining it from many different aspects, Is there anything else that you would like to add to what is Frankenmuth?

N: Well I guess just from the point of view of being a traveler, when other people talk about Frankenmuth they do not talk about coming to Frankenmuth just because of the Bavarian Inn, Zehnder's or Bronner's. They come to Frankenmuth because of the image that it projects which for most people it is just a unique clean town, You know there are no natural wonders to draw anyone here. That's what is always brought up. We enjoy Frankenmuth because it is different, clean and somewhat unique.

Appendix J

Interview: Chief James Petteys - A: This is Annette Rummel, It is September the third and I am here with police chief James Petteys, and I would like to ask you a question; What is Frankenmuth? So first let me say thank you for participating in this, and we'll begin maybe you could tell us a little bit about yourself, about when you moved here, about your family maybe some background. And then we will start right out with in your opinion what is Frankenmuth?

J: Well I have been the police chief in Frankenmuth, it will be twenty-two years this November. I came here in 1976. Prior to that I had been with the Michigan State Police for eleven years. And my wife Jan and my two children Ryan and Ann, we have lived here all of our, well basically most of our lives. My two children were born here, and we still live here.

A: Okay, and in your observation living here all those years, if someone were to ask you, What is Frankenmuth? How would you responds?

J: Well, my perception of it might be different obviously than someone else's. From the police department standpoint we always view Frankenmuth as two or three different communities. We have a community here that is basically very low profile police from 7AM to 7PM. It is a different type of policing from 7PM to 2 or

3AM, and then it is a third one from 3am back to 7am. We view it as obviously a tourist community. But then from the police department's view and mine, we get into these mixes of the different type of community. What we do between 7am and 7pm is a lot different than what we do, and the people themselves that come here are different during that time. We view it, me personally, as a tourist community with a large segment of the people who live here who are employed outside of Frankenmuth. In fact, the bigger places that employ people in Frankenmuth hire a lot of people from outside of Frankenmuth. So we really have a mix of different people working here, different people coming through the city and yet I think the thing that I have always appreciated about it, two things actually, and you know, you've heard it a thousand, million, billion times, the cleanliness, and how much pride people have in this community. And how well we are all able to work together. And I think with everything that has transpired over the last couple years with some degree that has bothered me a lot. Because there has been some dividing of things in there, and I personally, that has bothered me. Because we have never been like that. I mean we have a township city commission that needs, you know, and we work so well with our township and that hasn't changed, and I think that is pretty unique. The fact that we have such a great working relationship with our township. And in general I think all of the people, I think those two things and the ability to work together. If there is a job to do we get it done. And I think that is a pretty unique thing for us.

A: Okay, could you talk a little about your family life, and maybe your religious background in Frankenmuth and touch on a few of those points?

J: Well, I have a daughter who is 27 and she and her husband just had their first child a month ago and right now she is on maternity she is an RN. He is employed in Frankenmuth at DaVinci's Restaurant, and they have been back here for a couple years; they were in Grand Rapids area, because that is where they both went to school. And my son Ryan is a Fifth year senior at Michigan State and hopefully will be gainfully employed in the not too distant future. My wife Jan is a pre-primary impaired teacher in Clio school system. We attend St. Lorenz church, and have since we moved here. Our kids both went to St. Lorenz School, and both went to Frankenmuth High School.

Our daughter is a graduate of Grand Valley State University, and I say Ryan is at Michigan State University. We lived here if you get right down to it here in Frankenmuth for over thirty years. Because I was a State Policeman in 1968, got transferred to the Bridgeport post and moved into Frankenmuth at the time and have never left. In three years we lived in three different places, but the third place we have now lived in for twenty-seven years.

A: And how do you feel about the school system your children attended and the church group you and your family participated

in?

J: Well, I don't think there is a better school system in the state of Michigan. There maybe some that are equal to but we have a drop out rate that is less than one percent. The latest figure I saw was a half of percent. And when kids graduate from Frankenmuth High School and go away to college they are pretty darn well prepared. And we have been at St. Lorenz church for thirty years, and we have gone, we being our family, have gone through obviously some changes. When our kids were little my wife was actually home employed for the first, I don't know until our kids were both in high school, or close to it, I don't remember exactly. So she was able to be a teacher assistant at St. Lorenz. She would go in helping the kids like they always do and when your kids are in those grades, you are a lot more active in activities. As they have grown up and moved away, even though they are coming back now. You become, I feel, even though I was active at St. Lorenz as a basketball coach both guys and girls from '83 to '88, on activity there in the school atmosphere is a lot less, is basically non-existent. You know we are still active in the church and participate in that part of it.

A: You know you brought up a good, interesting topic about your children returning here to Frankenmuth, can you comment on that part of it?

J: Well, Ann and her husband Ken have been married four years now. For the first two years they were both employed in the Grand Rapids area, and then he was offered a position back here of employment, and they have only been back two years, and yea it was. There was no driving desire by my daughter and her husband to get back here. It wasn't like my daughter said " Oh we have to go back tonight!" They probably would have survived very well in the Grand Rapids area, and they owned their home over there at the time and everything. The opportunity to come back here was there, and no matter what you say, daughters are going to be closer to their family than maybe sons are to there in the big picture, and it has worked out well. They haven't lived so close that they have been a pain, and yet they are close enough that we are now in a babysitting mode.

Appendix K

Interview: Mr. Jerry Thompson - A: I am here with Jerry Thompson to ask the question; What is Frankenmuth? So first let me say Thank you for coming and being part of this record. This tape-recording, once transcribed, will also become property of the Frankenmuth Historical Museum. So Jerry let me start out, your background and why you have been invited here. You are a member of the Frankenmuth Chamber Board of Directors, You have been a chairman of the Frankenmuth Bavarian Festival and served on that Board of Directors, you have been very involved in community as a Lions Club member, and a member of other services and volunteerism, and most recently selected as the Chairman of Frankenmuth 2000, and has served in the capacity of the financial chairman. So you have a great deal of background and information as far as Frankenmuth. Did I miss anything?

J: No, not anything that you have gotten

A: Okay, A member of what Church

J: Methodist

A: The Methodist church in Frankenmuth, and you live here in Frankenmuth?

J: Yes

A: So you have a lot of ties to the community in addition to volunteerism. So tell me Jerry, in your opinion what is Frankenmuth?

J: First of all I think it is valuable to take into consideration that I am a transplant to Frankenmuth, so I bring with me a knowledge of living in other communities. The general make up of Frankenmuth is similar the community that I lived in, the community that I was born and raised in being from a community predominately rural, and taking that into consideration and making the conscious decision to call Frankenmuth home and to raise our family here. I've pondered exactly how you would describe Frankenmuth. I would say if I had to put it into one word I would use the word "community, and community meaning a gathering of people who have similar interests and similar goals that diversity exists, the overall, overshadowing commitment and requirement is for the better good of the community. In Frankenmuth I think more than in a lot of

other towns. Community takes on a spirit, it is the way people think, It doesn't mean there is always a sense of agreement, but it means there is always a sense of commitment one to another.

While disagreements and differences of opinions and goals and objectives may exist, they can never overtake what is to the best benefit, protection of the community as community. So there are a lot of ways to look at any community that I think that that's what makes Frankenmuth unique, and it's not exclusive but it is very special.

A: In thinking about Frankenmuth would you address it from various angles of your life? Your volunteerism, your membership in the church, your experience doing business here. Maybe elaborate a little more in these areas.

J: Part of what Frankenmuth represents too is that it isn't just business and tourism, there is a strong religious foundation in Frankenmuth, I found that Lutheran is tolerant and encouraging all religions. And again I think that represents a diverse village. I mean its ability to take care of itself. The manner and method that business is carried out in Frankenmuth again is similar to business transactions that you would find anywhere. There is also a sense of a higher purpose. Dollars and cents

are also often measured in the benefit to the community. And I could name specific instances that I have seen: that dollars and cents profit has been sacrificed to the benefit of a higher purpose. As a result of that it usually comes back and benefits even higher in dollars and cents, but the goal isn't always the bottom line driven, unless you take importance of community, family and God and put those as the bottom line. And that is somewhat unique to Frankenmuth. Again, it can be found in other locations, but it is more consistent in this community than other communities I've seen.

A: Is there anything else you would like to add to what is your opinion is Frankenmuth? Any other comments or anything else you would like to add other than what you have said?

J: The only endorsement I think I would give to the word community would be Family. That means immediate family, extended family and there is a sense of family. And that is possibly another definition of community that I think that when you use the word "family" that maybe it creates a more level complacency. I would use "family" in that sense.

Appendix L

Interview: Mr. Martin Zehnder - A: Today is September third and I am with Martin Zehnder. He is the Chairman of the Board of the Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce/Convention and Visitors Bureau. And I am going to address the question to Mr. Zehnder, What is Frankenmuth? So first, thank you for taking the time to do this, and why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself and then what you think Frankenmuth is?

M: Well, I am a life-long resident of Frankenmuth. I grew up here; I went through the school system here. I have been in business now for about twenty years, and in the automobile business, which my family started in Frankenmuth in 1926 and promoted throughout the years here, and I went to the St. Lorenz church, various boards and committee, served in various capacities there. As far as business is concerned, I think it is a very unique community as far as doing business here; people work together, there are a lot of opportunities for business people the community draws in a lot of tourists, but also beside the tourist there is a great opportunity for people to have business' that aren't really related to tourist as such, and the climate here is outstanding as far as that is concerned, and as far as residents of the Frankenmuth area, that live in the township, but overall the community has always had a very clean look at it. People are always concerned of how Frankenmuth looks their yards and sidewalks, and so on and so forth, are

always neat looking. They pride themselves of taking care of their property, their businesses their store fronts, business fronts, and so on and so forth. It is also rich in heritage, as far as the original settlers that came here a hundred and fifty-two years ago, and started the community. That heritage is still on going today. Of course, a lot of that is through the Lutherans that came here that established the community. So religion is still a very big part of the community, not only Lutheran now a days, but other denominations have moved in and are here, but overall religion is still a big part of the folks that come here to carry on that heritage that was started one hundred and fifty years ago.

A: What is Frankenmuth as far as raising a family here? Do you have any comment on that?

M: I believe it is an outstanding community to raise a family in. There are excellent school systems here. Parochial schools, St. Lorenz in particular is one of the largest parochial schools in the country. Some of the other denominations have schools here also for their 1st through 8th grades. And then of course, our high school and public system is also outstanding, very fine education. It is also a community that pride themselves in education and furthering education for their families and children and so forth. In that regard, the ratio of young people going to college is also very high. Michigan State's outstanding university in East Lansing,

the University of Michigan, and nearby is Saginaw Valley and Delta. There is a big opportunity for the youngsters to advance to higher levels of education. Also, since we are in the automotive beltway of the Saginaw, Flint, and Detroit area, Northwood Institute has an outstanding automotive program as well as Kettering University in Flint. So there is great opportunity for higher education.

A: And what about service organizations?

M: Service organizations, obviously the people that choose the various organizations are very active and they really work together. Among all the organizations to promote the entire community, and it is not let's say that, the Lion's club does their thing, and the Rotary does their service work and so forth. We have Jaycee's and even though they are individual service clubs, when it comes to working together everyone pitches in and does the community activity and promoting which benefits the entire community, and the fact that we have an organization called the civics events council, people from all walks of life really, and any service club members can be part of it. And they do a lot of the festival planning that we have here in Frankenmuth, and do an outstanding job promoting the community, and obviously through the service clubs.